



PRESS RELEASE

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VOLUSIA COUNTY MAN PLEADS GUILTY

TO MAILING ANTHRAX HOAX LETTER TO GOVERNMENT OFFICE

United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced that Wayne Dale Allen, Jr., 39, of DeLeon Springs, in Volusia County, pleaded guilty before the Honorable United States District Court Judge Anne C. Conway to mailing a threatening letter that was an anthrax hoax, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 876. The maximum penalty Allen faces is five years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, one year of supervised release, and a special assessment of \$100.00. Allen also will be required to pay restitution to Volusia County for the cost of responding to the anthrax hoax letter.

According to information presented by the government during the plea hearing, on October 26, 2001, a letter addressed to the Soil Conservation office in DeLand, Volusia County, Florida, was delivered and opened. The letter threatened a soil conversationist by name. The mailing envelope contained a white powder. Local law enforcement and fire departments were called to respond, employees were evacuated, and the area was sealed

off while authorities tested for anthrax. The white powder was tested by the Volusia County Health Department, but it did not contain anthrax. Investigation by authorities led to Mr. Wayne Allen as a suspect. The Natural Resources Conservation Service Office is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The case was investigated by the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General, and United States Postal Inspectors. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Bruce S. Ambrose.